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# Iowa Library Quarterly

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## State Library Board

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### *A Centennial Dream*

Iowa and libraries grew up together. In 1838, Congress appropriated $5,000 for a territorial library at Burlington. In 1847, a state librarian was appointed, the capitol then at Iowa City. As towns grew, subscription and association libraries were formed. When funds from Carnegie became available, libraries were built all over the state.

Today, Iowa has 313 libraries supported by taxation, more or less inadequately. Yet, 42% of our population, mostly on farms or in rural communities, do not have public library service.

100 years ago men of vision saw the need for books for our pioneers. A library was financed. Is it too impractical to dream "BOOKS FOR ALL" in this centennial year? A county library bill will be presented at our next legislature. Let's work for it and make Centennial year a memorable one in library history.

—49th Annual Report of the
Cedar Rapids Public Library
March 31, 1946.

## LIBRARIANS IN PLAN TO BRING SERVICE TO ALL

Would Extend Service to County Borders

By **Josephine McHenry,**
Denison Librarian

From the Iowa State Library Association meeting held May 1-3 in Des Moines, I brought home much enthusiasm for improvement in our library service.

This was the first meeting since 1941 and hence my first attendance. It was interesting to talk to other librarians about our common problems.

The chief aim of the association is to obtain county-wide library service to all citizens of Iowa supported by general taxation. At present only those living inside the city limits are entitled to free cards in our library. Those outside must pay $1.00 per year for this privilege.

This is very cheap as our figures show it costs $2.00 per borrower to maintain the present library.

Another aim of the group is to have an appropriation by the state legislature for a full time roving member of the state library in Des Moines, to come to all accredited libraries to consult the trustees.

The theme of most of the talks was that we must get reading material to all the people, that the only way to maintain our freedom is to have an informed public. Newspapers and the radio are widely used and effective, but the whole picture is obtained only if all sides of a question are understood. This is best done through books.

—Review, Denison, Iowa
May 9, 1946

## READIN' RIGHT

By **Evelyn F. Van Wagner**

### Must Night Fall

Conventions generally can be summed up with one attribute. Sometimes it is brilliance, sometimes gaiety, sometimes profundity, sometimes efficiency. But the word which, to this attendant at least, best keynotes the meeting of the Iowa Library Association last week is Gloom. Gloom in world affairs, gloom in national affairs, gloom in state library affairs, and even gloom in local library affairs.

The mantle of gloom in international affairs was spread by Robert Blakely, keen - minded editorial writer on the Register staff. He served with the OWI during the war and had a good opportunity to observe trends in politics. He gave the meeting little hope for survival without an effective world government, although he thinks the United Nations is not the best method. The atomic age has made the world need world government before it is capable of supporting it, Blakely says.

The mantle of gloom in national library affairs was spread by Kathryn P. Mier of the State library commission of Missouri who looked more like a society woman than a librarian, and Helen Rogers, assistant state librarian of Illinois. They both pointed out the large percentage of people who still do not have library service. The gloom in state library affairs was emphasized by them, by Blanche Smith, our efficient state librarian, by Helen Rex, state legislation chairman, and the newly elected president of the Iowa Library Association, Mrs. Raymond Sayre, Mrs. Reul McColm and Mrs. C. E. O'Neil added to the dire picture of bookless rural people in their panel discussion.

The gloom in single libraries over the state is not so heavy, being mostly caused by recalcitrant trustees, by "gifts" to the libraries, by censorship and other problems of book selection and library administration. It seemed to be the "smart" thing at this year's meeting to deprecate and belittle the gift of the Carnegie corporation of the numerous libraries in small towns over the nation. The idea is that they have caused the general public to think of a library

as a building when it should be thought of as a service. To this librarian that is only partially true and whereas, our library building is out-of-date and needs some re-arrangement, still would Rockwell City have had a library for as many years as it has if it had not been for Andrew Carnegie? I think not.

The awarding of the Johnson Brigham plaque to an Iowa author was an interesting thing. This year it went to Darrel Garwood for his "Artist in Iowa," a biography of Grant Wood. Mr. Garwood was unable to be present so his mother was there to receive it for him. There were several real live authors at the banquet meeting however. There were Ruth Suckow, a white-haired, ruddy-faced woman, who has written several novels about Iowa, Florence Crannell Means, who writes juvenile books with social implications, William J. Petersen, author of "Steamboating on the Upper Mississippi." Quite a galaxy of stars.

Although a good half of the meeting was devoted to discussion of ways and means of bringing library books to the farm doorstep, and although as stated above the atmosphere was one of gloom and foreboding, there were a couple of talks which were more cheerful and helpful. One of the best things was the talk of David Appel, book editor of the Chicago Daily News, who talked about "Trends in Publishing." Book talks are always interesting and especially by one with his standing. The other good book talk was on book selection and weeding and discarding given by Lelia Wilson of the Fairfield library. Librarians always need some good down-to-earth advice on these tricky duties.

—**Advocate**, Rockwell City, Iowa
May 9, 1946

## PUBLICITY CONTEST

The judges of the publicity displayed at the Iowa Library Conference awarded first place to Thelma Kirkpatrick, librarian of Drake Free Library in Centerville; second place to Lydia Margaret Barrette for her scrap book of newspaper articles about the library. Miss Kirkpatrick's winning article follows:

## DRAKE LIBRARIAN SELECTS 38 OF THE 50 BEST BOOKS OF 1945 LISTED BY THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

If you're writing a book, or thinking of writing one, it would be wise for you to consult with Thelma Kirkpatrick who is librarian at Centerville's Drake Library.

Why?

Because Miss Kirkpatrick seems to be able to know, when she peruses a book, whether it is going to click as one of the top books of the year.

### Keen Judgment

Last year Miss Kirpatrick and her board selected 38 out of 50 books credited with being the best books of 1945 by the American Library Association and in the art of "picking" that is no mean accomplishment.

Not only did the local board experts pick 38 out of 50 of the top books but they picked 12 of the small list of "next to best'. These books are all available at the Drake library so there is no need for local people to say "No" when asked "Have you read that new book that has made such a hit . . .", etc., etc.

The Centerville library board is composed of Mrs. A. B. Fenton, Mrs. George Milani, and Mrs. Charles Brummitt.

### The List

The list of outstanding books includes: Nation of Nations, A. Woolcott, American Chronicle, Teacher in America, The Young Jefferson, Pleasant Valley, Rooster Crows for Day, Enrico Caruso, This Is Where I Came In, The Black Rose, Bolts of Melody, Great Son, Peacock Sheds His Tail, Cherokee Strip, A Lion Is

in the Streets, Solution in Asia, These Are the Russians, and Cass Timberlane.

### The Egg & I

The World The Flesh and Father Smith, The Egg & I, General Marshall's Report, Up Front, The Folded Leaf, Pride's Way, Primer for White Folks, House of Europe, The High Barbaree, and Fighting Liberal.

### Three O'Clock Dinner

Anything Can Happen, Poor Child, Immortal Village, Home to India, The Townsman, Rickshaw Boy, Captain from Castile, Days and Nights, Dragon Harvest, Atomic Energy for Military Purposes, The Pattern of Soviet Power, One Nation, Cannery Row, Russia Is No Riddle, Robinson Crusoe, U.S.N., The White Tower, The Missouri, Sixty Million Jobs, An Intelligent American's Guide to Peace, My Indian Family, Apartment in Athens, Springfield Plan, Tom Paine, America's Godfather, Black Boy, and the Best from Yank, the Army Weekly.

—Daily Iowegian and Citizen
Centerville, Iowa

## WRITING UP TO THE TEEN AGE

A talk given before the Iowa Library Association

By Florence Crannell Means

It is always a pleasure to meet with a group of librarians, and it is always an enrichment. Again today I am impressed by the scope of your knowledge, and thankful that my topic is what it is. How could I presume to talk to you on any other? The only thing I can possibly tell you that you do not already know better than I is what goes on inside my own study when I write my own books. So that is the viewpoint from which I address you today: the purely personal.

For that reason I speak primarily of fiction, fiction being my field. In fact, I am now on the point of making my first essay in non-fiction for the young: a biography of Dr. George Washington Carver, for use as a school textbook in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. My husband and I are cruising around Kansas and Iowa on the trail of facts and setting to illuminate for us Dr. Carver's pre-Tuskegee days. If any of you have suggestions to offer, they will be gratefully received.

"The juvenile" has long walked under the cloud of the potboiler, written not for love but for money to finance the writer while he ventures into other and more honored fields, and of the stories written down to the young reader with a patronizing pat on the head. Some of us well remember such stories, forming the greater part of children's fare in our childhood: **Wikky, the Crossing Sweeper, Alone in London,** and the like. Today's writers are drawing away from the latter fault. I imagine most of us set an imaginary adolescent out in front of our typewriters, and write to him, or even up to him, rather than down.

For today's child is in many respects remarkably wise. Perhaps no average child has known so much about science and about world affairs. Indeed, he is so wise that many editors, teachers, librarians, feel that he needs no teen-age books; that he can easily take the stride from children's to adults' shelves. Still, there are adolescents and adolescents, with backgrounds and needs as varied as themselves. Is there not, then, need for books of all types, written especially for the teen age?

In writing for the teens or for anyone else it is my deep conviction that the writer must write from an inner compulsion what is within him to be written, if his work is to be real and enduring. He cannot be too much moved by anyone outside himself. Still, if he has any commonsense, he will have an ear to the ground for what is wanted; for what the adolescent wants, and for what the wise adults want him to have. It is obvious, certainly, that the

adolescent will not read what he does not want; so why write it?

What does the teen age reader want in his fiction? First, a good story, with the suspense beginning at once and holding him to the end: a story which moves rapidly but not too rapidly.

No, not too rapidly. I asked a certain critic about one of my own books which had met a fairly good response, but not so good as others of my list which seemed to me less worthy. I did feel, I told her, that ADELLA MARY had, within the limits of my own ability, everything to make it successful.

"Perhaps it has too much," said Siri Andrews: "too much plot, moving too rapidly, with too many characters, so that interest is divided and the reader unable to identify himself with any one person."

For, less consciously but just as really, the young reader demands strong, vivid characters, with whom he can merge himself. What stories, for the young or for the old, have lived if their characters did not live?

When I set about writing a new "adolescent novel," then, I try to develop strong plot and strong characters. Setting and theme may come first, but the right characters must rush quickly into that setting, take possession of that theme, and they must become real and vital. They must be actual to myself, as actual as people I meet and touch, or I can never make them real to anyone else. Just so, the setting must not be "nowhere in particular," a teacher of mine used to say, or that's where it will be to my readers: "nowhere in particular."

I chart my characters; I know how they look and speak and act. I know a great deal more about them than I shall ever put into the book.

Next I consider what sort of plot would logically flow out of the interaction of these people and this setting. I write it down, consider it, question whether the motive is strong enough and whether the suspense carries through. Then I write a longer story of the story and test it again. And finally I chop the synopsis into chapter lengths and begin the really joyous part of the work, the actual writing. For it is joy. The second writing is even more delightful, after the course has been cleared and the writer can dally and pick a few flowers on the way. The third writing, after my husband, my daughter and my writer friends have all given the manuscript the faithful wounds of a friend, is still a delight. I won't say so much for the proofreading. By that time, I grow dubious as to the merits of this new child of mine .

The result of all this should be, even if it isn't a good story, rapid but not too rapid, with strong characters with which the reader can identify himself, thus living out their drama with them.

But there are other wants and requirements to be considered than those of the young reader. There is that powerful body of adults: parents, who still do most of the buying, and teachers and librarians, most important of all in aiding the children's choices. Even though we must write from within, must write with love and joyous excitement, nevertheless we need to listen to their counsel, make use of their knowledge.

You have always seemed to like the period story, the historical story. It helps make history live. Also, it lends a certain sense of continuity needed now more than ever. Have there ever been children or youth with so little realization of continuity? So many of them seem to hang in mid-air, without a solid base of what has gone before.

Yet there is danger in the historical, the period piece; danger that we shall depend too much on the glamour of the setting; that plot and characters shall not be strong enough to carry themselves without

the props of a strange and fascinating scene. Too many historical novels, adult as well as juvenile, are wooden puppets bright with tinsel and satin, going through the movements of a slight plot against a garish setting.

I have had the rich enjoyment of writing a number of period stories, and although this difficulty must always be borne in mind, the task of recreating a period is an engrossing one. Like most of my fellow-writers, I go first to the library (of course), to the historical society, to museums, to "old-timers." Often I am ready for the actual writing just when the time comes to go to our mountain cabin for the summer. Sometimes, then, I have made it a point to take with me no reading matter except books that were published in the period which I am trying to portray, or books that were being much read in that period, or magazines that were published then. I immerse myself in the chosen period. For it is necessary not only to recreate costumes, customs and speech, but thought. Years ago my father, who lived through my first books with me, commented while reading one of the manuscripts, "But, Flossy, people were not thinking along those lines in the 1870's." Again, skimming through a magazine almost ready for mailing, he sent up a cry: "Flossy, what is this I see? Baking-powder biscuit in 1872? If I remember rightly, baking-powder was invented about 1874."

Those details! If the recreation of a period is to be accurate, its component parts must be accurate, trivial though they may seem. Well do I remember some of my early struggles in verifying facts to the satisfaction of the late beloved Ira Rich Kent, of Houghton Mifflin's.

It is a tenet of mine that the writer must stay inside the period of which he is writing. I couldn't say "There were no automobiles in Janey's day," for there were no automobiles, and I could not mention what had not yet come into being. So I was delighted with my mother's story of her first encounter with a horseless carriage. There, on the Wisconsin farm in 1872, she stood at the front fence and watched an amazing sight: a buggy careening down the dusty road without a horse, without a mule, without anything to pull it! — Gleefully I used it in CANDLE IN THE MIST, for it told definitely, without emerging from the 1870's, that this was before the day of automobiles. But Mr. Kent came back with objections: he could find no record of automobiles so early. No, the memory of my mother and my grand-aunt was not enough, since human memory was fallible. I must get the facts verified in print — print not being fallible. It would take too long to recount my efforts. EVEN THE LIBRARY gave me no help, nor did my dozens of inquiring letters. CANDLE IN THE MIST went to print without a horseless buggy.

But when the sequel, RANCH AND RING, was begun, I determined to vindicate the veracity of Mother and of Great-Aunt Lettie by using the horseless buggy. I began my search at once, and was successful. I believe it was the Wisconsin Historical Society that verified the existence of horseless buggies at that early date, having records of a prize offered for any vehicle which should proceed under its own power, as fast as ten miles an hour and as far as ten miles (I am recalling the figures with my fallible human memory). Though none fulfilled the requirements, several did enter the contest. So my horseless buggy chugged triumphantly into RANCH AND RING.

Similar struggles ensued with straight pins—the safety pin not being made in the early seventies—and with straight shoes, women's and children's shoes being commonly made without rights and lefts, so that careful people changed them about from day to day, to wear them evenly. Each of the trivia had to be substantiated, and each—and many

others—at the cost of much searching and perhaps dozens of letters.

But let us return to the requirements of the experts: artificiality is not the only disadvantage in the historical story. Many of you are saying that our day is so difficult, so hazardous, for youth, beset with so many painfully real problems, that we should give the young person honest stories of his own time and his own conflicts.

Many of these stories, you say, should be regional, in today's America, showing the parts that make up this splendid national mosaic of ours, with its beauty and its ugliness.

That brings us to the minority groups, and to the desire that has grown deep and burning in my own heart. That is the desire to present to our own white boys and girls the boys and girls of other races, other creeds and colors; to present them as just "folks," only superficially different from each other and from ourselves. To me this understanding of all peoples is the deepest need of a critical era; and, indeed, its only hope.

I believe sincerely in the fundamental likeness of us all. At first it astonished me to find that a few days in the midst of any unlike group, Negro, Oriental, Indian, blotted out for me any sense of the differences between us, so that I no longer saw my companions as Negroes, as Orientals, but as friends, and indeed was vaguely surprised when I looked in the glass and saw myself so nondescript of feature and color in comparison to the suavity of their contours and the mellowness of their varied browns.

SHUTTERED WINDOWS was one of my early ventures into this field of writing, and it came about almost by accident. When I went for a short stay in a school on one of the sea islands off the coast of South Carolina, it was for the purpose of writing about little Negro children, for the board of education of my denomination. This school, with a normal department and a practice school on the campus, offered me many children. I was warned at the outset not to expect easy friendship with the older girls. Mostly Gullah, isolated from the world, they were proud, race conscious, resentful.

So I made it clear to them at once that I was not planning to write about them. Through the days the friendship did flower, after all. And all the while I was growing more and more fascinated with the beauty of black cypress swamps and drooping Spanish moss and mocking-birds and live oaks, more and more concerned with the futility of many of the rural schools, rickety and small, with only the most primitive equipment, and sometimes with glassless windows whose heavy shutters must be closed in bad weather. Symbolic of the lack of opportunity, those Shuttered Windows, behind which the children could not see to read or write.

On the last evening of my visit, the principal let the girls ignore the closing bell and come to talk to me. They overflowed my room, in bathrobes and slippers, and in stocking-caps, because the damp island air would otherwise kink their artificially straightened hair. They were just girls. They talked of their aims, their hopes, their despairs. At last there was a flash of eyes between two of the leaders, like a prearranged signal, and Jessie Ree said, "Mis' Means, we want you to write a book about us! We want you to write it just as if we were white girls,—and leave the Problem out."

But the wiser Susan said, "Oh, Jessie Ree, no one could write a book about us and leave the Problem out."

So, as you can easily see, that book had to be written.

Thus also with TERESITA. We have many Spanish and Mexican friends in Colorado. We have enjoyed their native grace, the charming customs they have carried over even into drab surroundings. We

have enjoyed the beauty of the background in Mexico and marveled at the old Spanish colonies still lingering in southern Colorado and, even more primitively idylic, in the New Mexican mountains. There I have seen the descendants of the daring Spanish colonists of the sixteenth century pursuing their quiet, thrifty ways. They weave their beautiful Chimayo blankets; they drive in their goats to thresh the wheat; they winnow that wheat by hand; they wash every grain of it; and finally they carry it to the little log mill that straddles the stream. Some of their young people go out into the world for college, for jobs. Such a college graduate, beautiful Juanita, said soberly to me, "My brother has gone to Colorado Springs to work. He says I could never believe the sort of place where he has to live. Always, in the cities, they crowd us into the lowest parts. And, Mrs. Means, maybe it is because we are weak; but when people think we are low, then we are low."

Teresita, too, had to be written.

So also did THE MOVED-OUTERS, the story of the evacuation of the Japanese in these United States, and their trail of hidden tears. I had long had friends among our Japanese, and their tragedy fired my heart.

Yes, for my own requirements in writing up to the teen age I must place first the intense desire to write, so that the book is written with zest; then accuracy of information; and the best style I can possibly find in myself; and all the technique I would use in the adult novel—all the psychology — though neither technique nor psychology openly exhibited. And finally I think that a complete honesty, an incandescent sincerity, are prime requisites.

Such is my unattained ideal for the book that is written up to the teen age.

## FOLKLORE IN THE WORLDS OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY

**Presented to Library Workers with Children and Young People Section**

**By Mrs. Inger Boye**
Children's Librarian
Highland Park, Illinois

The war is over. We have won one phase of it, and we are deeply grateful for that. We are, however, now in the proces of trying to win the second and most important phase, THE PEACE, and we are beginning to realize what a gigantic task this is, a task which requires of us a great many things, but above all calls for increased knowledge and deepened understanding, spiritually as well as materially.

In their profession librarians are more or less enlisted for service along the spiritual lines, and there we may be privileged to help substantially in building what we sincerely hope may be the structure for a better world.

Into this picture marches Folklore as a worthy ally. From the four corners of the world it brings its material, bits of color, of customs and habits, of feeling and beliefs. Like little pieces of mosaic they fit into each other to form together a great irridescent picture of international interest with international importance. For Internationalism, in the best sense of the word, I believe, we realize now, must come to the foreground in settling the peace.

I have no illusions regarding the size of my subject, and my talk today is no attempt to survey the field of Folklore, or even touch the highlights; it is simply a few facts and thoughts concerning Folklore, particularly **Traditional Fairy Tales**, in the Worlds of Yesterday and Today.

Deep down under the so-called Art of Literature runs a vein of pure poetic feeling which before the times of books founds its expression in myths and sagas, in fables and legends, in tales and songs, in what

we today, with a rather recent word call Folklore.

Around the blazing fires on open heartstones in dark nights, or under the spell of the mysterious twilight haze on a summer's eve, or perhaps in the restful shade of a giant tree, these tales were born and nourished.

It was an art without the names of famous authors, or the definite influence of forceful personalities, an unwritten literature with its roots fastened deeply in the memory of souls, from mother to daughter, from father to son, so the tales went.

They were tales which reflected life as it seemed at the time, life and nature. For there were things in nature which could not then be explained without giving them a personified touch, strange things like the contrast between sunshine and rain, light and darkness, or the moon, the changing of seasons, the ocean or the animals. There was wonder, there was fear.

Every rock, every stone had a supernatural meaning, every hill, every mountain had its mythical people, every grove, every brook was the scene of a definite happening, and as real to the people of the times as everyday life is to us. — Belief in the supernatural is common to all primitive peoples. It is, however, interesting to note that it has often been stronger, the characters more crudely and more robustly cut, in the countries where the nature is wild and rough, while in the flat countries it usually seems calmer, and the characters more gracefully developed. This seems to substantiate one theory, that man's primitive religion and philosophy arose from experiences and associations with nature, some of which have come down to us in the form we call Fairy Tales.

Although we may never, from the many theories prevailing, be able to establish the actual origin of Fairy Tales, we may be agreed, that Fairy Tales as we know them today, are products of many influences during various times, and also that one of the strongest influences must have been nature.

Probably one of the best examples I can use to show nature's influence on Man's mind and feelings is wild rugged Norway with its never-ending treasures of Folklore and supernatural beliefs, a corner of Mother Earth, where every inch of ground is literally enchanted ground, and the password is: "Once upon a time". . . .

Out of the grey old mountains come the Trolls, giants in form, moss-grown and overwhelming, huge heads, or several together, like a cluster of grotesque-looking mountain tops, long noses, used for this or for that. They move slowly, are at times ugly and mean, quite often, however, genial and good-humored but clumsy and dumb, depending entirely on the great physical strength, and—a cunning, little human being always gets the best of them.

Deep down, below the mountains or in hills and stones lived the dwarfs who from the resources of the interior fashion the finest weapons and the most precious jewels in their dark workshops.

From the changing light and the mysterious, treacherous mountain mist comes the Hulder. She can be kind, but mostly she is as shifting and changeable as her deceiving soul. We usually find her as a lovely golden-haired girl peacefully herding a flock of well-fed cattle on a mountain pasture. She calls and she coaxes the lonely wanderer with her song and her beauty until he is forced to come. If she can get him inside the mountain wall, and keep him there until the sun rises, he is usually hers. But she must be careful. She must always face her victim. If she turns around, he may discover the signs of the Hulder, her back, as hollow as a shell, and the cow's tail, which she can never get rid of, no matter how bewitching she makes herself; and if those are discovered, then the spell is broken.

It is interesting and gratifying too,

to contemplate this bit of ancient human philosophy. It manifests a primitive and fundamental faith in the ultimate victory of the good, that amidst mental ugliness and deceit, in whatever form they may take there is always the chance to discover a cow's tail and a hollow back, and—to break the spell.

Did you ever stand on a mountain bridge over a waterfall, watching the waters turning somersaults down the mountain side? Did you not sometimes feel a sudden urge to throw yourself down into it? That is the Fossekall, who calls you with his fiddle. He sobs and he cries, and he fills you with an irresistible longing to follow him into the turbulent waters. And sometimes he calls you again, sometimes on a quiet summer eve, when the sun has set, you may hear his soft sigh and his wistful playing, from the deep, black pool below the old mill wheel.

In the dark, cool forest, when silence is shod with peace, you may see Nokken, the Water Sprite, sticking his mosscovered head out of a shining little lake, and looking at you with his melancholy eyes. He is, however, a creature of many forms and many moods, for you may also find him in whirling rivers and in the storm-tossed waves of the ocean, screaming and hooting. It is wise to heed this danger signal, for it foreshadows the drowning of a human being.

In daylight and sunshine these creatures are all harmless and powerless, but when the sun sets and the darkness approaches, evil forces are abroad, and the fireside becomes the safest place for a plain human being.

As life was, so were the tales, direct, naive and elementary without superfluous details, but filled with the rich, simple wisdom of a widening experience, of imagination and a gradual growing awareness of ethical values. And—since this was the art of the common people, it was usually more concerned with general types of characters than with outstanding personalities. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why we seemingly find the same story, only slightly varied, in so many countries. For example the stories in which a man always has three sons, the youngest one always the clever one, or the princess who is always the most beautiful one in the land, or the apparent fool who always wins in the end.

Of course, other reasons for this apparent sameness in stories in the various countries may be marriages, wars, or perhaps be partly due to a common source, as is maintained by those who feel that in the Vedas, the sacred Sanskrit books of India, one finds the origin of all fairy tales. It may also be due to travelers, tailors and shoemakers who went from house to house in search of work, troubadours, minstrels and jongleurs in the Middle-Ages, the necessary household bard at a Welsh king's court, or the Skald in Norway.

An old custom in Normandy required a guest to repay hospitality by telling a tale, perhaps carried from Norway by the Vikings who settled in Normandy. In the ancient Viking homes of Norway there was not a more welcome guest than the story teller. In other places they might sing a song. This custom is still to be found some places in Brazil, I have been told, brought there with emigrants from Portugal.

The traditional fairy tale grew out of a primitive society, where social and economic conditions everywhere, were more or less on the same level, the living, beliefs and customs simple and homogenous. Consequently the tales appealed to everyone, and belonged to everyone. As it was once expressed: "A whole world sang as one man."

Since these stories, however, lived and traveled by way of mouth, everybody unconsciously used them with the right and the pride of an owner, pouring into them all his personal individual poetic and realistic talent,

and yet obeying the few simple rules which they obviously must have had at the time, concerning motive and form.

This may be important to keep in mind today, when we see people who consider our cultural state so far advanced, our civilization so all embracing that we can afford to ignore these hundreds of years old rules, and so proceed to retouch the old tales a la twentieth century.

Let us remember that the traditional fairy tale for hundreds and hundreds of years was like a living thing, changing, growing externally, while keeping intact the original, fundamental traditions from which it sprang, or as Ruskin expresses it: "Through successive generations the fairy tale takes new color from their manner of life, and new form from their changing moral tempers. As long as these changes are natural and effortless, accidental and inevitable, the story remains essentially true, altering its form, indeed like a flying cloud, but remaining a sign of the sky, a shadowy image as truly a part of the great firmament of the human mind as the light of reason which it seems to interpret."

Curious things could, however, happen to a tale through translations. Consider for example Mr. Perrault's Cinderella. To quote Walter de la Mare: "It is certain that Charles Perrault's Cinderella slippers were not made of glass, brittle stuff, indeed to run down marble steps in at midnight, but of fur, the French word **Vair** (a kind of white and grey fur) having been mistaken for the word **Verre**, which means glass." My childhood Cinderella, also called Ashputtle, considered one of the oldest Cinderella stories, had golden slippers, and I can recall no glass slippers before I was able to read the English version. These variations, of course, constitute no fundamental change in the story, and the original ethical value remains the same in whatever country, or through whatever language you meet Cinderella, provided the tale has been allowed to reach you in a natural way.

Of course, whatever influence there might have been of an individual originator disappeared gradually through retelling from generation to generation. What was left, however, was the important thing, namely the broadly outlined features of a race or a nation. Thus Folklore became a sort of cooperative undertaking, representing a true-cross-section of, and the continuity of the spirit of a race or a nation.

And here is a far-reaching international significance of Folklore today, one which certainly should not be overlooked by librarians and other educators, the fairy tales of all nations and all races, as a link in the chain of greater understanding of nations and races. And may I say here, do not let us neglect our own folktales, which will help to interpret to other peoples our vast America, with all its varied and interesting folkways. The more one knows about the various nations and races, the more one feels and comprehends their national and racial contributions, the greater the possibilities are for seeing and respecting each one of them as an integral part of a world civilization, and that, I believe, would lead far on the road to a longer lasting peace; and the fairy tales bring, in their own fanciful, spiritual way, ideals, philosophy, traditions and national color, of the nation or race in which they have developed, as perhaps no other literature can bring.

Like a natural, deeply sunk well, this folk art is found hidden away in the hearts and souls of a nation. From this well, unconsciously perhaps at times, springs all Art of Literature in a country, and to its clear, cool waters it will always return for refreshing impulses, for renewed strength and power.

As times passed, however, the well became an almost forgotten well to the outside world, untouched and

comparatively unnoticed. In fact the literature of Folklore for years and years was considered beneath the dignity of those worthy gentlemen who through the Middle Ages and up to the 19th century claimed to be the caretakers of the Art of Literature. We have only to recall how reluctant Mr. Perrault in France was to have his name linked with the tales of Mother Goose, the Mother Goose Tales which, indeed, perpetuated his name.

There were however, notable collections of folk tales written down quite early. **Reynard the Fox** was written as a series of short stories already in the tenth century, **The Sanskrit and Hindu Tales** around the 12th century, and about the 15th century we find **The Thousand and One Nights,** in this country commonly known under the name of **Arabian Nights.**

In the 17th century **Il Pentamerone** appeared in Italy. It was an excellent collection of about 50 tales gathered from the mouths of the Neopolitan peasants. The compiler, Giovan Basile, sincere, cultured, possessed the same responsibility which typifies all real searchers for Folklore when it comes to faithfulness towards the spoken word. His collection has been considered the basis of many others, and curiously enough, we find among his tales, stories like the German Rapunzel, Hansel and Gretel and others.

But as a whole the tendency of the 17th and 18th centuries was towards the highly stilted, artificial feelings, the curlicues and intricate ornaments and simple Folklore did not appeal to such overdressed taste.

Then appeared Rousseau with his battlecry: "Back to Nature," and his plea for simplified living.

That still did not change the general attitude toward Folklore, or open the eyes to the strength and power lying unused in a clear well. In some ways, however, it may have prepared the way for the German, Gottfried Herder, who was the real discoverer of the possibilities and values that lie in the literature of the common people, in their songs, their myths and tales; not exactly in the spirit of Rousseau, as a path to personal happiness, but more because he considered Folklore the literature in which one found the purest expressions of traditions with their habits and customs, their language and spirit. He also felt that the Art of Literature had need of opening the channels which led to this rich well of source material.

Others followed Herder. Chief among them were the Brothers Grimm, both librarians, scholars and research minds by instinct and choice. Their first concern was, as they themselves expressed it: "Faithfulness to the truth." For thirteen years they went from house to house to gather the old tales from the lips of the peasants. Sometimes they were able to use them as they were told by a certain story teller, sometimes the two brothers re-wrote them in their own way, but always adhering to the principles of science and truth. And when these "Kinder and Hausmarchen" were published, one may truly say that the foundation for all later science of Folklore was laid.

The well was discovered! To it flocked eminent scholars and philologists, giving us collections of Folklore from practically every country on the globe, men like Asbjornsen and Moe in Norway, who laid their ears close to the heart of the people, and listened to the deeptoned beats of joy, of sorrow, and dreams of the past, men like Jacobs, Ruskin and Lang, and in this country our own Joel Chandler Harris in his Uncle Remus stories.

Our country is fortunate, indeed, to make use of them all, for the roots of the present are fastened deeply in the past, and to the one who inquires about the present the past is important.

The influence of Folklore has been noticeable in practically all walks of life, through the ages. In music and art we meet it every day, in Stephen Foster's songs, in Grieg's marches and dances, in fine and commercial art everywhere. For centuries men

and women in the old world have used motives from Folklore in their metal work, in their carvings and weavings. Our fashions and our furniture show its influence, and our language is full of little sayings and everyday expressions which can be traced back to Folklore. What a drab, colorless medium it would be without this picture making habit with which we have become so familiar in Folklore.

We talk of Aladdin's lamp, and the golden egg. We put on our seven-league boots to reach the world's end, or at least something that lies east of the sun and west of the moon, and so on. Definite pictures are unfolded in our minds, and further explanations are unnecessary. It gives color, beauty, and poetic richness, indeed, to our everyday speech.

As for the child, it is his world the fairy tales picture, his atmosphere they bring, and his language they speak. They stimulate his imagination, the source of all creative and visionary forces in anyone's life, they develop his sense of beauty, and above all, they give him simple lessons in moral living. The best of our fairy tales, and we need not use any others, draw a straight, clear line between right and wrong. Right is rewarded, wrong is punished, simple, basic training. The fairy tales are the gifts of Mankind's childhood to all childhood, so please, let them always be within the reach of a child.

Finally, with a backward glance over the road we have traveled, we see that because Folklore, from the morning of Time, was created out of Life itself, out of truth and wisdom gathered on the way, it has lasted from generation to generation.

And so—may I leave you with this little thought, expressed in the lovely old English proverb: "Memory is the power to gather roses in winter."

## NEWS FROM IOWA LIBRARIES

**Algona**—Beth Annis was hostess to a group of neighboring librarians Sunday, May 26. Lora Shipley of Sheldon, Evelyn Simpson of Spencer, Mrs. Martha K. Haas of Emmetsburg, Mrs. H. E. Woodward of Whittemore, Lucile Peterson and Mrs. Ann Peterson of Estherville were guests. They had dinner together at the Algona hotel and spent the afternoon at the library discussing library matters. Mrs. Annis entertained the group at tea.

**Ames**—The branch library for the fourth ward was opened early in May to the great satisfaction of the residents of that section of the city.

**Burlington**—Bessie Reid Shipp has been appointed supervisor of children's work. She comes from Scranton, Penn., where she was children's librarian. Her library training was received in the University of North Carolina.

Mary Dugan, a former staff member, has returned from her position in Quincy, Illinois.

**Callender**—Mrs. Jane Conlon has been appointed to take the position of librarian following the resignation of Mrs. E. E. Hanson.

**Cambridge**—A Memorial Library was dedicated May 30. A library room has been furnished by the American Legion. Col. H. E. Hadley of Nevada made the address of the evening.

**Carroll** — The library has been presented with $50 proceeds from the paper drives. The money is to be used for the purchase of books for memorials to the men who gave their lives in the war.

**Clarinda**—Mrs. Ada Chamberlain Pullen has been appointed children's librarian.

**Davenport**—Elizabeth Martin has been named librarian of the Davenport Public Library succeeding Mrs. J. A. Davidson. Ruth Kellogg, head of the catalog department, has been appointed assistant librarian.

**Dayton**—Since April 1, 1946, the library has been tax supported, insuring better service to the community.

**Des Moines — Drake University** — Mrs. Glenn Kenderdine, librarian for the last 21 years, has resigned. Robert H. Wilkins of Chicago has been appointed to the position. He

will receive his doctor of philosophy degree from the graduate library school of the University of Chicago. He was assistant librarian at Ohio Wesleyan University and director of libraries at Chicago Teachers College and Wilson Junior College until he entered the army in 1942.

**DeWitt**—The library has been redecorated inside and out and presents a very fine appearance.

**Fairfield**—Mrs. Frederick P. Ford has been appointed to fill the position on the library staff vacated by Mary Helen Jones.

**Hubbard** — A beautiful grandfather clock has been given to the library by Dr. J. F. R. Brubaker who requested in his will that it be presented to the community and placed in the library. The clock, over 250 years old, has been in the Brubaker family for 150 years.

**Iowa City**—Joyce E. Nienstedt assumed her duties as librarian June 1. Mrs. Jessie B. Gordon, librarian since 1923, resigned in order to devote all her time to her book store. Miss Nienstedt comes from the public library in Wichita, Kansas, where she was head of circulation and personnel officer.

**Keokuk**—After 50 years of service as librarian of the Keokuk Public Library, Nannie P. Fulton resigned April 1. The library board passed resolutions of appreciation of her fine service to the community and regret that her failing health made it necessary for her to retire. Karl Kiedaisch, Jr., a staff member, has been appointed acting librarian, pending selection of her successor.

**Manchester**—The library has received a gift of $4000 from Mrs. Lora Stewart who put this into her will forty years ago.

**Marcus**—Mrs. Camilla Ament has been named librarian succeeding Mrs. James Whealon, who resigned.

**Marshalltown**—The Ministerial Alliance of Marshalltown established a fund to purchase books for the library as a memorial to the Rev. P. G. Dennis, late pastor of the Central Church of Christ.

**Randall** — A Public Library was opened May 4 in the front rooms of the town hall.

**Spirit Lake**—Florence Butler, children's librarian in the Sioux City Public Library, spoke to a group of women at the Spirit Lake library April 8. In the evening she spoke to the Dickinson County Education Council on new techniques used to interest children in modern literature.

**West Liberty** — Mrs. Adelaide Stober, librarian for 27 years, has resigned, effective July 1. She has served the community faithfully and well.

**West Union**—Mrs. Walter H. Beall presented 117 books from the library of her late husband to the library. She also has arranged an annual cash gift of $10 for the purchase of a book of biography or history in his memory.

## NECROLOGY

**C. E. Bale**, president of the Manson library board, passed away April 7.

**Harry B. Lichty**, president of the Waterloo library board, died May 26 after an illness of nine months.

**Sebastian Lake**, of the Sac City library board, died February 16.

**Helen M. Lee**, for many years assistant librarian in the State Library, died April 6. She had been ill seven years, following a cerebral hemorrhage.

**Anna Olson**, who had been connected with the Nissen Library in St. Ansgar since 1927, died at her home April 18. Appointed on the library board in 1927, she resigned in 1931 to serve as librarian, a position she held until she resigned in 1943 on account of her health. She was again appointed to membership on the board and continued to serve until her death.

**Wallace Ramsay**, member of the Belmond library board since 1917, died April 13.

## THE GREATEST LACK

**By R. J. Blakely**
Editorial Writer on The Register and Tribune, Des Moines, Iowa

Perhaps I take too much for granted, but I assume that most of us agree that the world faces this dilemma: On the one hand, we must establish soon a world government which, unlike the United Nations, is based on individuals instead of on states and which is responsive to democratic control. Confederation never has worked. It seems unlikely that it will work in the United Nations. We haven't time for gradual development. Yet, on the other hand, we feel that the human race is not ready for federal democratic government. The first authority which must be delegated to a world government is control over all military forces and the first guarantee we must establish is the basic democratic rights. But these ends seem likely to be the **last**, not the **first**, to be achieved. We cannot conceive that the members of the United Nations could agree upon such a radical revision of the charter as is needed, or that, if they did, their proposals would be ratified. As Anne O'Hare McCormick has said: "The jangle you hear is not so much national anthems out of tune as clocks out of time. The primeval tom tom still beats while the atom bomb ticks. Russia is straddling the centuries, in victory more than ever pounding backward to Peter the Great and racing at the same time to overtake Henry Ford and Henry Kaiser before she has caught up with Thomas Jefferson. The clocks of Europe are turning back and the clocks of Asia are turning forward. And there are places where time stands still because the night does not lift and there is no tomorrow." I add—the clocks of America jangle; technologically we prepare for the day after tomorrow; socially we strive to regain the day before yesterday. In brief—we've got to have world government now; we can't get world government now.

Of course, this analysis may be wrong and things may work out in the blind illogic of history. But as vertebrates we haven't the right to count on this. So, what should we do?

We should give full support to the United Nations, and all measures which strengthen it and grow out of it.

We should press and prepare for the transformation of the United Nations into a federation.

We should enter sympathetically into the minds of other peoples. This means particularly appreciating the Russians' pride and fear and the need of such peoples as the Chinese to telescope into decades processes which took centuries in the west.

We should work to overhaul our domestic society toward political, economic and social democracy.

We should rethink the fundamental nature of democracy and be imaginative toward the potential varieties of form which it might take. If democracy can be embodied only in the cultural forms it has received in the west, then it is doomed to a brief and provincial life, because to most peoples of the world these forms are alien. Yet, though we must be hospitable toward the varieties of form which democracy may take, I do not see how we can escape the conviction that all must somehow embody the freedoms to think, investigate, communicate and disagree.

As I give this counsel I am aware of how inadequate it is and I am haunted by the fear of atomic war, not coming as it came before—through deliberate aggression with the hope of victory—but coming with the pushing of a button in terror. If you haven't read, "Pilot Lights of the Apocalypse" in the January **Fortune**, I urge you to do so.

The truth is that we are already well along in an atomic armaments race, and the tragedy is that the three great powers are quickening the race by jostling each other for

advantages which will soon be obsolete. Russia is trying to gain security through the establishment of a ring of buffer states. Britain is trying to gain security through preserving her life-line of empire. The United States is trying to gain security through holding bases and building planes for destroying the war potential of any aggressor. But neither buffer states nor naval and air bases nor bombers and fighters will count for much in a war of radio-controlled rocket-propelled atomic-warhead missiles, perhaps revolving outside of our atmosphere.

This race must be stopped before it goes much further. For stopping it I see only one hope—the establishment of something similar to the Atomic Development Authority recommended by the State Department —international ownership and operation of all mines and factories dealing with dangerous fissionable materials.

A small hope—and yet a hard one. The plan is concrete. If we can remove the fear of sudden attack, we shall have gained time. Perhaps with this time we shall establish world regulation over what may ultimately be the chief source of energy and thereby go far toward solving the problem of war itself.

The plan advocates action on the one plane which rises above the barriers of language, politics, economics and psychology—the plane of science.

In my judgment educators have no more important task than to explain the need for this kind of plan. Perhaps Russia will not accept it, in which case it will not work; but certainly it will fail if the people and the government of the United States do not advocate it in good faith. The spirit in which we offer it might determine whether or not it is accepted by other nations.

When we as laymen support this plan we do so because we see no alternative. But most of us aren't able to understand the technical factors behind the provisions of the report. Most of us haven't the training to evaluate, for example, the dependability of the denaturing process upon which the plan is based. And most of the few who could evaluate this and many other technical factors won't be given the chance to do so because of security regulations.

We shall be advocating for reasons we do not fully understand a kind of world government by scientists whose decisions we shall be unqualified to criticise and whose actions we shall not dare to try to control because of the fear of the consequence of their failure.

Is this sort of plan democratic? No. Is it communistic? No. It can not be subjected to the errors of either a democratic majority or an autocratic minority, and it cannot be used to serve a political or economic creed, else it will fail.

What is it then? Don't you recognize it? It is technocracy—the new theocracy of science.

We are fortunate that at this stage so many of our great scientific minds are also philosophic. They are our philosopher-kings. But it need not necessarily be so. Great scientists served the Nazis. Lesser scientists are frequently contemptuous of the layman. Scientists in America in the past have had a group history of almost singular withdrawal from public affairs. Two of the human reactions on the part of some of the scientists to their new position of power will be, I predict, corruption and ambition. Eventually we must establish democratic control over our technocrats too by establishing a stronger humane tradition within science and a broader public knowledge of scientific methods. But at the moment, just as during the war we had to trust our military leaders, now we must take chances on our scientists.

How did we get into this situation, anyway?

Let's briefly consider the relationship between science and modern societies.

(To be continued)